

Contract workers pour and level cement while constructing the Cedar Falls recreation trail, part of the overall Cedar Falls Flood Damage Reduction Project.

Flood Damage Reduction Projects Near Completion

By Mark Kane, Public Affairs

What happened during the summer of '93? Ask that question to almost anyone in the Midwest and it's doubtful they'll quickly recall what baseball team was in the pennant race, but rather they're more than likely to remember the 'Flood of 1993.'

In particular, a person from Hannibal, Mo., might recall attending Tom Sawyer Days, an annual event held in the hometown of Mark Twain during the 4th of July, but in 1993, the event would've been a wash out if it weren't for the Corps of Engineers.

Shortly before the 'Flood of 1993', the Corps of Engineers completed a floodwall in Hannibal that couldn't have been planned any better if the Corps would've known about the impending flood a year in advance. The truth is no one knows what year a flood could take place, which is why flood damage reduction projects can be so important to river communities throughout the District.

This summer, the District will cap off three flood damage reduction projects; in Cedar Falls, and Muscatine Island, Iowa., and Ottawa, Ill.

In Cedar Falls, Iowa the central business district along the Cedar River is subject to severe flooding. The flood of 1961 caused businesses within the study area and the Cedar Falls waste water treatment plant, power plant, and water works to incur significant damage. The flood also caused more than 100 residents to be evacuated from their homes. Near record and equal flooding occurred during the summers of 1993 and 1999. The 1999 flood was successfully fought by emergency measures, in conjunction with the partially completed levee project. The project's construction contract was awarded in June 1998 and will be completed this June ending with a dedication ceremony June 22.

One hundred thirty miles southeast of Cedar Falls, Iowa, the City of Muscatine, Iowa, the Muscatine Island Levee District and Muscatine-Louisa County Drainage

District No. 13 form a joint drainage and flood protection area of 30,700 acres that is protected by 15.6 miles of existing sand and clay levee. The District increased the levee's level of protection to a 200-year flood level.

The project consisted of improving approximately three miles of existing sand levee with new rock shell construction, improving approximately three miles of existing sand levee, constructing a railroad swing gate closure, improving drainage facilities, constructing ramps and approximately 600 feet of I-wall, and relocating existing utilities.

The dedication ceremony for the Muscatine Island Flood Damage Control Project will be held June 2.

Across the Mississippi River 125 miles east of Muscatine, Iowa, the District is spearheading another flood damage control project in Southeast Ottawa, Ill.

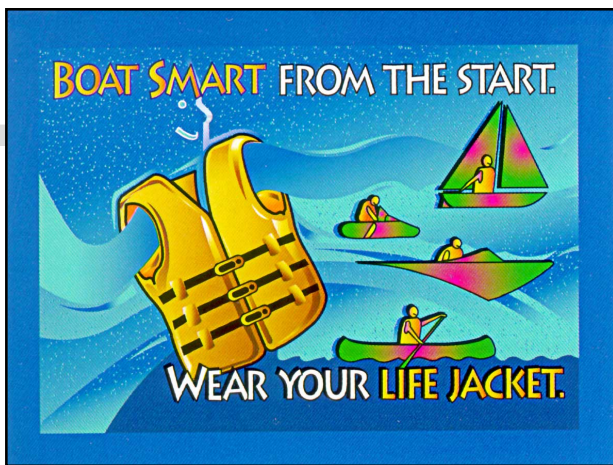
Ottawa's flood problem was originally caused by overbank flooding of both the Illinois and Fox Rivers. The high school's athletic fields received flood damage annually, and the high school building received flood damage nearly every five years. The basements of local residents also flooded during high river stages. The opportunity existed to enhance a public service and reduce the amount of public expenses related to flood damage.

The recommended plan consisted of a 100-year levee and provided for the construction of approximately 3,700 feet of earthen levee, 300 feet of concrete floodwall, placement of riprap, ponding area and five new or modified storm sewers and gateways. The recommended plan was scaled back in September 1996 at the request of the sponsor. The as-built project consisted of a shortened reach of downstream levee, revising the tie-off into high ground from the recommended plan.

The reduction in flood damages will allow uninterrupted use of athletic fields and primarily benefit the general public by reducing the amount of public expenses related to flood damages.

Construction will be completed March 31 and the project's dedication ceremony will be held June 1.






WASHINGTON D.C. - The North American Safe Boating Campaign wants to get something off of its chest and onto yours ... a life jacket. Each year approximately 800 people die in boating-related accidents - eight out of ten victims were

not wearing a life jacket.

"Thousands of people would be alive today had they taken the simple step of wearing a life jacket when they went out on the water," says Virgil Chambers, executive director of the National Safe Boating Council.

In an effort to combat these alarming statistics, the National Safe Boating Council, in partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard and the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, will launch the "2000 Boat Smart from the Start" North American Safe Boating Campaign during National Safe

Boating Week, May 20-26. The campaign is designed to reach more than 80 million boaters around North America and communicate this year's message: "Boat Smart from the Start. Wear Your Life Jacket"!

During National Safe Boating Week, the National Safe Boating Council, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators and the Canadian Safe Boating Council, along with the Coast Guard Auxiliary, Power Squadrons, Army Corps of Engineers and other groups, organize local exhibits, provide special programs on safe boating and generate extensive media coverage. 

As the weather gets warmer, baseball banter fills the airwaves, Memorial Day recreation plans get more detailed, and Iowa boating will become safer this summer.

On a 94-0 vote, the Iowa House recently voted to increase penalties for operating a motorboat or sailboat while intoxicated and to close a loophole in the law that allowed suspected violators to refuse a breath test without penalty.

Anyone caught operating a motorboat, personal watercraft or sailboat while intoxicated would face penalties ranging from a serious misdemeanor for a first offense to a Class D felony for third and subsequent offenses.

The bottom line; after Gov. Tom Vilsack signs the bill, which he has indicated he will do, it will allow a law enforcement officer to require a blood-alcohol test if there is probable cause to suspect the boater is intoxicated.

The law applies to operators of all types of motorboats, including jet-skis, and sailboats on navigable public waters, but does not apply to private waters.

A good thing to keep in mind: the

blood-alcohol content for legal intoxication while boating is 0.10, the same as for drunken driving.

If you're caught operating while intoxicated: the first offense is a serious misdemeanor with a two-day mandatory minimum jail term or up to 1 year maxi-


imum jail term, as well as a \$1,000 fine and one-year prohibition on operating a boat. The second offense within 12 years, is an aggravated misdemeanor with a mandatory minimum seven days in jail to a maximum jail term of two years, \$1,500 to \$5,000 maximum fine, as well as no boat operation privileges for two years. Third and subsequent offenses are, Class D felonies with up to five years in prison and a fine of \$2,000 to \$7,500.

If you tell the officer to take a hike or you refuse to take the breath/blood test, you will receive one-year prohibition on operating a boat, a \$500 civil penalty for



first offense, a \$1,000 for second offense, and \$2,000 for third and subsequent offenses.

If you cause serious injury due to drunk boating, the offense is a Class D felony with a 30-day minimum jail term and a maximum jail term of five years with a \$2,500 to \$7,500 fine and an additional 1-year loss of boating privileges.

If you kill someone due to drunk boating, that is a Class B felony, with up to 25 years in prison and a six-year loss of boating privileges. 

Iowa Cracks Down On Drunk Boating

By Mark Kane, Public Affairs